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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the First Committee (A/53/578)*]

53/72. Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 52/32 of 9 December 1997 on objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures,

Also recalling its resolution 35/142 B of 12 December 1980, which introduced the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, and its resolutions 48/62 of 16 December 1993, 49/66 of 15 December 1994 and 51/38 of 10 December 1996, calling upon all Member States to participate in it, and its resolution 47/54 B of 9 December 1992, endorsing the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters and inviting Member States to provide relevant information to the Secretary-General regarding their implementation,

Noting that since then national reports on military expenditures and on the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters have been submitted by a number of Member States belonging to different geographic regions,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General[1] on ways and means to implement the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, including, in particular, how to strengthen and broaden participation in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures,

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[1] A/53/218.

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General for providing Member States with the reports on military expenditures in standardized form reported by States and on the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters,

Welcoming the decision of many Member States to exchange and to publish information annually on their military budgets and to implement the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, as appropriate,

Noting the decision taken by the Conference on Disarmament to reappoint a Special Coordinator on transparency in armaments to seek the views of the members of the Conference on the most appropriate way to deal with the questions related to this item,[2]

Noting also the efforts of several regional organizations to promote transparency of military expenditures, including standardized annual exchanges of relevant information among their member States,

Reaffirming its firm conviction that a better flow of objective information on military matters can help to relieve international tension and contribute to the building of confidence among States and to the conclusion of concrete disarmament agreements,

Convinced that the improvement of international relations forms a sound basis for promoting further openness and transparency in all military matters,

Recalling that the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters recommended certain areas for further consideration, such as the improvement of the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures,

1. *Recommends* the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters to all Member States for implementation, fully taking into account specific political, military and other conditions prevailing in a region, on the basis of initiatives and with the agreement of the States of the region concerned;

2. *Welcomes* the resumption on 23 April 1998 by the Secretary-General of consultations with relevant international bodies with a view to ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present instrument to encourage wider participation;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for providing Member States with a report[1] on the outcome of those consultations containing, *inter alia*, recommendations on ways and means to enhance the participation in the standardized reporting instrument;

4. *Calls upon* all Member States to report annually, by 30 April, to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, using, preferably and to the extent possible, the reporting instrument as recommended in its resolution 35/142 B or, as appropriate, any other format developed in conjunction with similar reporting on military expenditures to other international or regional organizations;

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[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/53/27), para. 8.

5. *Encourages* relevant international bodies and regional organizations to promote transparency of military expenditures and to enhance complementarity among reporting systems, taking into account the particular characteristics of each region;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(*a*) To resume the practice of sending an annual note verbale to Member States requesting the submission of data to the reporting system, together with the reporting format and related instructions, and to publish in a timely fashion in appropriate United Nations media the due date for transmitting data on military expenditures;

(*b*) To promote international and regional symposia and training seminars to explain the purpose of the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures and to give relevant technical instructions;

(*c*) To circulate annually the reports on military expenditures as received from Member States;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue consultations with relevant international bodies, within existing resources, with a view to ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present instrument to encourage wider participation, with emphasis on examining possibilities for enhancing complementarity among international and regional reporting systems and to exchange related information with those bodies;

8. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to make recommendations, based on the outcome of those consultations and taking into account the views of Member States, on necessary changes to the content and structure of the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures in order to strengthen and broaden participation, and to submit a report on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session;

9. *Calls upon* all Member States, in time for the deliberation by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, to provide the Secretary-General with their views on the analysis and the recommendations contained in his report[1] and with further suggestions to strengthen and broaden participation in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, including necessary changes to its content and structure;

10. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures".

79th plenary meeting
4 December 1998